

REMARKS

Claims 1-18, 20, 22, and 24-38 are currently pending. Claims 1-9, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, and 27-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 11, 26, and 33-38 have been allowed. Claims 10, 12, 14, and 16 have been objected to, but are otherwise allowable. The specification and/or drawings have also been objected to.

Claims 1, 4-7, 12, 14, 16, 29, and 31 have been amended and claims 3, 8-10, 13, and 15 have been canceled without prejudice as shown in the Status of the Claims section, supra. Accordingly after entry of the above amendments, the pending claims are claims 1, 2, 4-7, 11, 12, 14, 16-18, 20, 22, and 24-38.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DRAWINGS

The figures are objected to. Figure 3 has been amended to address the grounds for the objection. More particularly, reference number --27-- on the original figure was amended to read --127-- and the corresponding text in the Specification has been amended. No new matter has been added.

SECTION 103(a) REJECTIONS

Claims 1-5, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, 24, 25, and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,652,749 to Stankowski, et al. ("Stankowski") in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,551,503 to Niers, et al. ("Niers"); claims 6, 20, and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable

over Stankowski and Niers, further in view of U.S. Patent Number 5,478,378 to van der Maas, et al. ("van der Maas"); claims 7 and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Stankowski and Niers, further in view of U.S. Patent Number 4,357,237 to Sanderson ("Sanderson"); claim 28 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Stankowski and Niers, further in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,425,946 to Funke, et al. ("Funke"); claim 30 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Stankowski, Niers, and van der Maas, further in view of Funke; and claim 32 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Stankowski, Niers and Sanderson, further in view of Funke. The Applicants respectfully traverse the grounds for rejection in view of the above amendments and for the following reasons.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claims 3, 8, 9, and 10, which the Examiner has indicated would be allowable. Claim 12, originally depending from claim 10, now depends from claim 1, which includes the subject matter of claim 10 (now canceled). Accordingly, the grounds for rejection are now moot. Independent claim 1 and all claims depending therefrom satisfy all of the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §§ 101, et seq. and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the grounds for rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 29 and 31 have been amended to depend from claim 1. Accordingly, the grounds for rejection are now moot. Claims 29 and 31 satisfy all of the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §§ 101, et seq. and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the grounds for rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 14 and 16 have been re-written in independent form, which the Examiner has indicated would be allowable. Accordingly,

the grounds for rejection are now moot. Independent claims 14 and 16 and all claims depending therefrom satisfy all of the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §§ 101, et seq. and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the grounds for rejection is respectfully requested.

OBJECTIONS TO THE CLAIMS

Objections to claims 10, 12, 14 and 16 have been addressed by re-writing claims 10, 14, and 16 in independent form and by changing the dependency of claim 12. Accordingly, the grounds for objection are now moot. Withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any matter that would expedite allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: May 27, 2009

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